**Highway Robberies**

2708. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that many people on National highways are regularly looted by extremists and also by robbers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether an ordinary citizen has to pay under threat to the extremist either while in transit or elsewhere, is he also punishable for such payments; and

(d) if so, the rationale for such laws?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) Available information in regard to incidents of dacoity and robbery on highways during the year 1996, 1997 and 1998 is given here below:—

| Year | Dacoity | Robbery |
|---|---|---|
| 1996 | 1,130 | 5,307 |
| 1997 | 1,196 | 4,967 |
| 1998 (upto October) | 547 | 3,061 |

(c) and (d) "Police" and "Public Order" being State subjects as per the Constitution of India, it is essentially for the State Governments to take such measures as are necessary to protect the people from dacoities, robberies and other crimes. The Central Government, on its part, has been providing financial and other assistance to the State Governments for strengthening their policing infrastructure.

**Introduction of Vehicle Tracking System**

2709. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item "Advani asks CMs to evolve proxy war" which appeared in the Economic Times, dated the 15th October, 1998;

(b) if so, whether Government have written to the neighbouring States of NCT of Delhi for modernisation of State Police by providing them sophisticated weapons and equipments and communication technology;

(c) if so, the complete details thereof; and

(d) whether Government propose to equip Delhi Police with the introduction of Vehicle Tracking System involving GPS receivers for combing terrorist activities and if so, the complete details thereof with estimated cost of the equipment?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) Government have seen the news-item which appeared in the Economic Times dated 15th October, 1998 under the caption "Advani asks CMs to evolve mechanism to fight proxy war."

(b) and (c) The Union Home Minister convened a Meeting of the Chief Ministers of Delhi, Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, and Rajasthan on 14.10.1998 to review the action being taken by these States to curb terrorist activities. The Meeting, among others recommended setting up of Soecial Task Force to evolve and implement an Action Plan to identify and tackle the problems being created by terrorists and criminal gangs for coordinated operations against Inter-State criminals, greater coordination of intelligence and strategy, amending of old laws for effective countering of strategies adopted by criminals, and strengthening of State Police forces, etc. Concerned State Governments have been requested to take immediate steps to implement the decisions taken at the meeting.

Modernising the Police Force is the primary concern of the respective State Governments. However, to supplement the efforts of the State Governments in modernising their Police Force, the Central Government has been implementing a Non-Plan Scheme for Modernisation of State Police Force. Under this Scheme